

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed March 16, 2006. Claim 1 and 2 are amended. Claims 5, 7, 8, and 22 are canceled. Claims 23-34 are withdrawn. Claims 1-4, 6, and 9-21 remain pending.

Election/Restrictions Under 35 U.S.C. §121

Applicants elect with traverse Group I, claims 1-22 drawn to a method for treating laundry for further prosecution in the present application. Claims 23-34 are therefore withdrawn from consideration but are not canceled. No fees are believed due for consideration of the present reply, however, if this is not the case please charge any such required fees, including any extension fees under 37 CFR subsection 1.136(a) to Deposit Account number 501257.

Objections to the Specification

The Office Action has objected to the disclosure because of several informalities. Applicants have amended the disclosure to correct these informalities. It is respectfully requested that these objections be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112 Second Paragraph

The Office Action has rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite with respect to the language “the treatment composition.” Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claim 2 has been amended and now refers to the bleaching and antimicrobial composition. It is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Barnes (U.S. Pat. No. 4,988,363)

The Office Action has rejected claims 1-2, 5-13, 15-17, and 19-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Barnes. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Barnes teaches a method for washing and cleaning of fabrics using a detergent composition where the pH of the composition is adjusted from a high pH (about 9 and preferably from 9.5 to 11.0) to a low pH (below 9, preferably from 7.3 to 8.5). See Barnes, column 2, lines 41-48. Applicants have amended claim 1 to call out a method for treating laundry where a laundry composition is applied at a pH from about 2 to about 8 and thereafter the pH is adjusted to a pH from about 5 to 11. Applicants believe that this amendment distinguishes the present invention over Barnes. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Macbeath (U.S. Pat. No. 5,716,923)

The Office Action has rejected claims 1-2, 5-7, 11-13, 15-16, and 20-22 as being anticipated by MacBeath. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

MacBeath teaches a method for cleaning soiled laundry using a detergent composition where the pH of the composition is adjusted from a high pH (about 9.5 to 13.0) to a low pH (from about 9.3 to 7.0). See MacBeath, abstract and column 2 lines 35-40. Applicants have amended claim 1 to call out a method of treating laundry where a laundry composition is applied to laundry at a pH from about 2 to about 8 and thereafter adjusted to a pH from about 5 to about 11. Applicants believe that this amendment distinguishes the present invention over MacBeath. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action has rejected several dependent claims as unpatentable under § 103(a) over additional references. Applicants believe that these rejections are moot in light of the amended claims for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Barnes and MacBeath as well as other reasons. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that these rejections be withdrawn.

Summary

It is respectfully submitted that each of the pending claims is in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is kindly requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' primary attorney-of-record, Anneliese S. Mayer, at (651) 795-5661, if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

Please consider this a PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME for a sufficient number of months to enter these papers or any future reply, if appropriate. Please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 501257.



Respectfully submitted,

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